

THE
GREAT DANGER
OF
Covenant-refusing,
AND
Covenant-breaking.

Presented
In a Sermon preached before the Right Honorable
THOMAS ADAMS Lord Mayor, and the Right
Worshipfull the *Sheriffes*, and the *Aldermen* his
Brethren, and the rest of the *Common-councell* of the
famous City of *London*, Jan. 14. 1645.

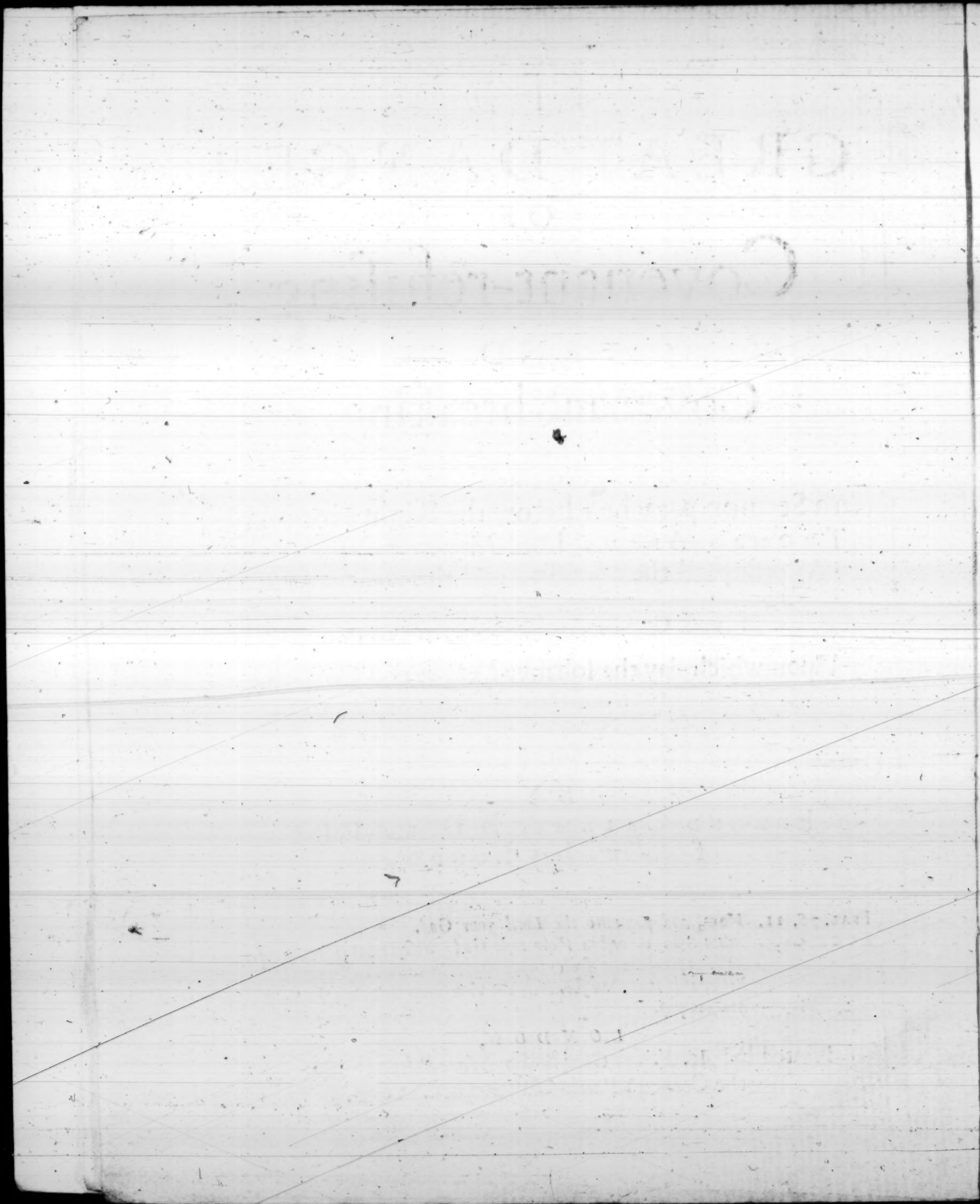
Upon which day the solemne League and Covenant
was renewed by them and their Officers with prayer and
fasting at MICHAEL Basinghaw, LONDON.

BY
EDMUND CALAMY, B. D. and Pastor
of Aldermanbury LONDON.

PSAL. 76. 11. *Vow, and pay unto the Lord your God.*

ECCLES. 5. 4, 5. *when thou vowest a Vow unto God, deferre not to pay it, for he
hath no pleasure in fooler; pay that which thou hast vowed.
Better it is that thou shouldest not vow, then that thou shouldest vow
and not pay.*

LONDON,
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the Crane in Pauls-Church-yard. 1646.





TO THE
RIGHT HONOURABLE

Thomas Adams Lord Mayor, and
to the Right Worshipfull the *Sheriffes*,
and the *Aldermen* his brethren, and
the rest of the *Common-Councell*.



Read in the Book of *Nehemiah*, that when the wall of *Jerusalem* was in building, the builders met with so much opposition, that they were forced to build with their weapons in one hand, and with their working tools in the other. They had enemies from without, and they had secret enemies amongst themselves. They met with many discouragements; but God carried them through all, and at last they finished the wall to the confusion of their enemies, and the rejoycing of their friends. *Nehemiah's* condition is our condition. The *Discipline and Government of the Church*, is to the Church as a wall is to a City. A City without wals is exposed to every enemy: so is the Church without a Government. This wall is now in building: the *Parliament* (blessed be God) hath contributed very much to this building; but yet we meet with mountains of opposition, and with many discouragements. Our enemies say, *What doe these feeble Presbyterians meane? will they fortifie themselves? will they make an end in a day? will they revive*

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the stones out of the heaps of the rubbish which are burnt? Even that which they build, if a Fox goe up, he shall even break down their stone-wall. Our enemies also raise false reports to weaken the hands of the builders, and to make us afraid, as they did, Neh. 6. 6. 10. They say, that the Presbyterian Government (which is the Government that comes neereſt the Word, and the Government of the beſt Reformed Churches) will prove Tyrannicall, and Episcopall. And that it is better to be under one Biſhop then under a hundred. But we answer, as Nehemiah did, Neh. 4. 4. Hear o our God, for we are deſpiſed; and turn their reproach upon their own head. And as Neh. 6. 9. Now therefore, o our God, ſtrengthen our hands. But that which is worſer then this, is; that our ſeeming friends ſeek to undermine us, and to terrifie us, and ſay, as Neh. 4. 11. They ſhall not know, neither ſee, till we come in the miſt among them, and ſlay them, and cauſe the work to ceaſe. And others are ready to diſcourage us, and ſay as it is, Neh. 4. 10. And Judah ſaid, The ſtrength of the bearers of burdens is decayed, and there is much rubbish, ſo that wee are not able to build the wall. It is impoſſible (ſay ſome) to purge our Churches according to the rule, they are ſo full of rubbish, and therefore it is better and ſafer to ſtudy Separation from, rather then Reformation of our Churches. But yet notwithstanding all theſe oppoſitions, and diſcouragements, I doubt not but God Almighty will in his due time finiſh this wall of his, and ſo perfect his own work, that all the enemies thereof ſhall caſt down their eies, and perceive that this work was wrought of our God, Neh. 6. 16.

For the effecting of this bleſſed work, God hath raiſed us up a happy Parliament. And alſo God hath raiſed you up (Right Honourable, Right Worſhipfull, and the reſt
of

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of the Common Councell) and hath raised up your *spirits* to strengthen our hands to this work, and to build the *wall* together with us, (each of us in our places) that so the *Church* may no longer lye waste, and open to all *Errors* and *Heresies*, and that we may be no longer a *reproach* to all other reformed Churches. This work by your help will quickly bee finished, as it is written, Neh. 4. 6. *So we built the wall, and all the wall was joyned together unto the half thereof, for the people had a minde to the work.*

The times wherein you live are indeed very troublesome: but be not discouraged; for it is foretold, *Dan. 9. 25. That the wall of Jerusalem shall be re-built, even in troublous times.* And let me say to you as *Mordecai* to *Esther*, *Esther 4. 14. Who knoweth whether God hath not raised you up to be Mayor, to be Sheriffs, Aldermen, and Common Councell men for such a time as this is?* Go on courageously, and God will trouble those that trouble you, and bring good to you, and to the Church out of these troubles. We reade of the Pool of *Bethesda*, that when the water was troubled, then it became a healing water. The untroubled water, was an unhealing water. So will God doe with you; he will make the troubled waters of the Sanctuary to become healing waters: Inso-much as we all shall say, *Periissemus nisi periissemus*; We should have been undone had we not been undone. Onely be strong and of a good courage: I say it again, be strong and of a good courage. I say it the third time (for so did God to *Joshua* in 4 verses, *Joshua 1. 6, 7, 8, 9.* Be strong of a good courage. The Lord hath made you instruments to doe much good for Church and State; the same God make you every day more and more instrumentall.

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And be not terrified and dismayed because of the many *Heresies and Errors* that are in the City. For as when the wall of *Jerusalem* was once built, all their enemies did immediately vanish into nothing, *Neh. 6. 16*. So when the wall of the Church shall be once erected, I doubt not but these prodigious errors will all vanish.

And as when the Sun riseth, all wilde beasts goe to their dens; so when the bright Sun of Christs kingly government shall appear in our Horizon, I trust all these beastly errors will betake themselves to their dens of obscurity and oblivion. It was said of *Augustus*, that when he was first Emperour he found Rome in a poor condition, but he left it in a glorious condition; *Invenit lateritiam, sed reliquit marmoream*. My prayer shall be (and oh that God would hear me!) that you may be able to say, When I was first Mayor, or first Sheriffe, or first Common-councill man, I found the City a City full of division, full of profanenesse, full of errors and heresies; but now I shall leave it full of truth, full of holinesse, and a City at unity within it selfe. *Inveni lateritiam, reliqui marmoream*.

For the better bringing of this to passe, you did lately renew your *solemne League and Covenant*; at which time this ensuing Sermon was preached. Since which time, not only the Sermon, but the Preacher of it, hath undergone many harsh and bitter censures. It is the wickednesse of these dayes to build their own designs upon the ruine of other mens good name. But surely God will never prosper such bloody practises. It is said of *Antiochus*, a wilde person, *Dan. 11. 28*. That his heart shall be against the holy Covenant. We have many amongst us, that in this are like unto *Antiochus*, whose hearts, tongues, and hands, are not only against our *solemne League and Covenant*; but against all that preach for it, or write in the defence of it.

There

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There is indeed a *Covenant* that some do much contend for, and make the very form of a particular *Church*, without which a *Church* cannot be a true *Church*, which is called a *Church-covenant*. For my part, I conceive that whosoever shall say, that a *Church-covenant* (I meane an oath expressed by formal words) is an *Ordinance* of *Christ*, and necessary to the very being of a *visible Church*; doth not only *un-church* most of the *Churches of Jesus Christ*, but doth also set up his own *invention* for an *Ordinance of Christ*. In the *New Testament* we reade of no such *Church-oath* at the admission of Members. And there is no place in the *Old Testament* (for ought I could ever reade) that speaks of a *Church-oath* to be taken at our admission into *Church-fellowship*. Indeed we have mention made of a *Nationall Covenant*, and of the *Covenant of grace*, and of *subscribing with our hands unto the Lord*. But what are these to a *Church-oath*; without which, no man is to be accounted a *Church-member*, or to have right to the *seales of the covenant of grace*? To urge this as an *Ordinance of Christ*, is to set our *posts* by *Gods posts*, and our *threshold* by *Gods threshold*, *Ezek. 43.8.* But if I should expatiate any further in this point, I should exceed the limits of an *Epistle*, and therefore I forbear.

My hearty desire is, That this *Covenant* which you have now taken the second time, may be carried about you in continuall remembrance. And that it may serve instead of a thousand *Arguments* to make you zealously serviceable, to *God*, to *Church*, and *State*. It is reported of *Theseus*, that he was so taken with the wonderfull works of *Hercules*, that he could not sleep for thinking of the wonders of *Hercules*; and when he slept, he dreamt of *Hercules wonders*; and was never satisfied till he had imitated him in working wonderfull things also. And
it

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it is also related of *Themistocles*, that he had alwayes in his thoughts by night and by day, the victories of *Miltiades*, and this made him insatiable till he had imitated him. Oh that you would thus deale with the *Covenant*! That you would think of it in your *bed*, in your *closets*, in your *walks*; and think of what particulars you have sworn unto, and never leave thinking untill you have fully performed your *Oath and Covenant*. And if you keep *Covenant* with God, the great God will keep *Covenant* with you, and all the *blessings* of the *Covenant* which are mentioned in the *book of God*, which is the *book of the Covenant*, shall be your portion for ever and ever. Which is the prayer of

Your much obliged

Spirituall Servant

EDM. CALAMY.



The great danger of Covenant-refusing, and Covenant-breaking.

2 TIM. 3. 3.

—*Truce-breakers*; or, *Covenant-breakers*.



You are here met this day, to humble your
soules before the Lord, and to renue your
solemn League and Covenant; I say, to
renue it, and take it the second time. It
is no unusuall thing for the people of God
to repeat and reiterate their Vows and
Covenants. The great and solemn vow
which we made to God in *Baptisme*, is renued every time we
come to the *Lords Supper*. And upon every *Fast day* wee
binde our selves anew to God by *Covenant*. The people of
Israel entred into covenant, *Ezra* 10. 3. And the same peo-
ple (as *Chronologers* observe) did re-engage themselves in the
same *Covenant*, *Neh.* 10. The Scripture tels us, that *Almighty*
God did * six times make one and the same *covenant* with *A-*
braham; and sware the same covenant twice to *Isaac*, *Gen.*
26. 4. 34. And therefore blessed be the great God who hath
put it into your hearts to engage your selves a second time
into a *Nationall Covenant*.

Compare
Ezra 7. 7. with
Neh. 1. 1.
* *Gen.* 12. 3. 7.
13. 15.
15. 18.
17. 7, 8.
Gen. 22. 18.

There are *six reasons* to justify this dayes solemnity before
God and all that require satisfaction about it.

1. Because this *Nationall Covenant* hath been a long time as
it were dead and buried and quite forgotten amongst most

Six Reasons to
justify the re-
nuing of the
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people,

The great danger of Covenant-refusing,

people. And therefore it is high time to raise it out of the grave of forgetfulness: and I hope this day will be to the *Covenant as a Resurrection from the dead.*

2. Because of the great scorn and contempt that is cast upon it by divers sorts of people. The *Malignants* call it a *conspiracy*; others, though not *Malignants*, yet *maligne* the *Covenant*, and call it a *snare*, a *trap*, a *temptation*, and account it a signe of a tender conscience to boggle at it, and of a loose conscience to swallow it without scruple. And therefore to vindicate the honour and reputation of the *Covenant*, and to wipe off the aspersions that are cast upon it, you doe well to take it the second time.

3. Because there are some that do openly professe their sorrow that ever they took it, and would fain recant and retract what they have done. And therefore to manifest that you are still of the same *judgement*, and that you doe not *repent* of what you have done, you doe well to take it the second time.

4. Because of the pronenesse that is in all men (even the best of men) to *break covenant with God*. A *Covenant* indeed is a *golden Girdle* to tye us fast to God; it is a *joyning and glewing our selves to the Lord*. The word *ὅρκος* which signifieth an *Oath*, comes from *ἔρκος* which signifieth a *Hedge*. An *Oath* and *Covenant* is a *strong hedge* to keep us from breaking out into disobedience. It is an entering into *bond* to become the *Lords*; it is a *binding our selves apprentice to God*. *Voluntas* (saith *Aquinas*) *per votum immobiliter firmatur in bonum*. But yet notwithstanding, the nature of the best man is very apt to *break these bonds*, and to run away from his great *Lord and Master*, to suffer this *Hedge* to decay, and this *golden girdle* to loosen and untye, and to *disjoyne and unglew* himself from God. And therefore it is not only commendable, but very necessary (and for this cause you are met this day) to enter into bond the second time, to *binde and in-roll* your selves again unto the *Lord*; to make up this *hedge*, to tye this *golden girdle* yet faster, and to joyn and glew your selves once more unto the *Lord* in a perpetuall *Covenant* never to be forgotten. It is reported of Bishop Hooper, that
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when he was at the stake to be burnt, the Officers offered to tye him to the stake : but he said , You need not tye me, for that *God* that call'd me hither will keep me from stirring ; and yet because I am partly flesh, I am willing you should tye me fast, lest I should stir. So may the best Christian here present say : *Lord I am carnall, sold under sinne*, I have broken those golden cords of the Covenant with which I have tyed my selfe unto thee. Though I am *spirit*, yet am I *flesh* also. And therefore I come to binde my selfe anew. As *Dalilah* dealt with *Sampson*, &c. so do I desire to deale with my self, and to tye my self yet faster and faster to God, if by any meanes I might be kept firme to him.

5. Because of the many *glorious deliverances* and *salvations* which God hath vouchsafed unto us. For since June last, we have had about 60 considerable blessings and mercies, which all are as 60 *Arguments* to call upon us not only to renue our thankfulnesse, but our Covenant also. Thus the *people of Israel*, when God had delivered them out of *Egypt*, renued their *Covenant* at *Horeb*, *Exod. 19*. And when they were delivered from their *Wildernesse*-enemies, *Deut. 29*. And the same people did afterwards, when God had given them the possession of *Canaan*, re-oblige themselves by a covenant, *Josh. 24*.

6. Because of the *sad* condition the *Church of God* is in at this time. For though God hath given us glorious victories over our enemies, yet the Churches of Christ lye desolate, *Church-reformation* is obstructed, *Church-Discipline* unsetled, *Church-divisions* increased. The famous City of *London* is become an *Amsterdam*, *Separation* from our Churches is countenanced, *Toleration* is cried up, *Authority* lyeth asleep. And therefore it is high time to take the Covenant again, that so you may endeavour with renued strength, as one man, vigorously and courageously, for the setting of the tottering *Ark* according to the sphere of capacitie in which God hath put you. You shall reade in Scripture, that the people of God did never any great service for the Church till they renued their *Covenant*; and you shall never read but that they did very great and glorious services for the Church, after the re-

people. And therefore it is high time to raise it out of the grave of forgetfulness: and I hope this day will be to the *Covenant as a Resurrection from the dead.*

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nuing of their *covenant* with God. In *Zerubbabels* time the Temple-work ceased for many yeares; but after *Ezra* and *Nehemiah* caused the people to enter into *covenant* with God, it went on prosperously and uninterruptedly. What famous things did the people of God after *Jehojada* had drawn them into a covenant! *2 Kings* 11.7.18. *All the people of the Lord went into the house of Baal, and brake it downe, his Altars and his Images brake they in pieces throughly, &c.* The like we reade of *Asa*, *2 Chron.* 15.14,15,16. and of King *Josiah*, *2 Chron.* 34.31,32,33. And thus I doubt not but you will endeavour to do in an orderly way according to your places.

These are the Arguments to justifie this dayes work before God to all the Christian world.

To help you in this, so pious, so Christian, so necessary, so solemne a businesse, I have chosen this Text. In the beginning of the Chapter the Apostle tels us the condition that the Church of God should be in, in the last dayes. *This know also, that in the last dayes perilous time shall come.* In the second Verse he tels us the reason why *these* times should be *such hard and dangerous times*; *For men shall be lovers of themselves, covetous, &c.* The reason is not drawn from the *miseries* and *calamities* of the last times, but from the *sins* and *iniquities* of the last times. *It is sin and iniquity that makes times truly perilous.* Sin, and sin onely, takes away Gods love and favour from a Nation, and makes God turn an enemy to it. *Sinne causeth God* to take away the purity and power of his *Ordinances* from a Nation. *Sin* makes all the creatures to be *armed* against us, and makes our own *conscience* to fight against us. *Sin* is the *cause* of all the *causes* of *perilous times*. *Sin* is the cause of our *civill warres*, *2 Sam.* 12.11. *Sin* is the cause of our *divisions*, *James* 4.1. *Sin* is the cause why men fall into such dangerous errors, *2 Thess.* 2.11. *Sin* brings such kinds of judgements which no other enemy can bring. *Sin* brings invisible, spirituall, & eternall judgements. It is *sin* that makes God give over a Nation to a *reprobare sense*. *Sin* makes all times dangerous. Let the times be never so prosperous, yet if they be sinfull times, they are times truly

2 Chro. 15.1.
Isay 42.24.25.
Judg. 6.13.
1 Sam. 28.15,
16.
Rev. 2.5.
Job 5.23.

Rom. 1.24

truly dangerous. And if they be not *sinfull*, they are not dangerous though never so miserable. It is *sin* that makes *afflictions* to be the fruits of *Gods revenging wrath*, part of the *curse* due to *sin*, and a beginning of *Hell*. It is *sin*, and *sin* only, that imbitters every affliction. Let us for ever look upon *sin* through these *Scripture-Spectacles*.

The Apostle in four Verses reckons up 19 *sins*, as the causes of the miseries of the last dayes. I may truly call these 19 *sins*, *Englands Looking-glasse*, wherein we may see what are the *clouds* that *eclipse Gods countenance* from shining upon us: the *Mountains* that lye in the way to hinder the settlement of *Church-discipline*. Even these 19 *sins* which are as an *Iron whip* of 19 *strings*, with which God is whipping *England* at this day; which are as 19 *Fagots*, with which God is burning and devouring *England*. My purpose is not to speak of all these *sins*: Only let me propound a *Divine project* how to make the times truly happy, for soul and body. And that is, To strike at the root of all misery, which is *sin and iniquity*. To repent for, and from all these 19 *sins*, which are as the *Oyl* that feedeth, & encreaseth the flame that is now consuming of us. For because men are *lovers of themselves*, *Vsque ad contemptum Dei & Reipublice*. Because men drive their own designs not only to the neglect, but contempt of God, and the *Common-wealth*. Because men are *covetous*, lovers of the world more then lovers of God. Because they are *proud* in *head, heart, looks, and apparell*. Because they are *unthankfull*, turning the mercies of God into instruments of *sin*, and making *Darts* with *Gods blessings* to shoot against God. Because men are *unholy and heady*, and make many covenants, and keep none. Because they are (as the Greek word signifieth) *Devils*, acting the *Devils part* in accusing the brethren, and in bearing false witness one against another. Because they have a *form of Godlinesse denying the power thereof*, &c. hence it is that these times are so sad and bloody. These are thine enemies, O *England*, that have brought thee into this desolate condition! These are the *sins* that will recruit the *Kings army*, if ever it be recruited: and if ever God lead us back into the wilderness, it will be because of these sinners.

And therefore if ever you would have blessed dayes, you must make it your great businesse to remove these 19 mountains, and to repent of these land-devouring, and soul-destroying abominations.

At this time I shall pick out the first, and the tenth sin to speak on. The first is *selfe-love*, which is placed in the forefront; as the cause of all the rest. *Selfe-love* is not only a sin that makes the times perilous, but it is the cause of all those sins that make the times perilous. For because men are *lovers of themselves*, therefore they are *covetous*, *proud*, *unholy*, &c. The tenth sinne is *truce-breaking*, and for feare lest the time should prevent me, I will begin with this sinne first.

The tenth sin then is *truce-breakers*, or, as *Rom. 1. 33.* Covenant-breakers. The Greek word is ἀσπονδοί, which signifieth three things. First such as are *fæderis nescii*, as *Beza* renders it; or as others, *infæderabiles*; that is, such as refuse to enter into Covenant. Or secondly, such as are *fædisfragi*, *qui pacta non servant*, (as *Estius* hath it) or *sine fide*, as *Ambrose*; that is, such as break Faith and Covenant. Or thirdly, such as are *implacabiles*, or as others, *sine pace*; that is, such as are *implacable*, and *haters of peace*.

According to this three-fold sense of the word, I shall gather these three observations.

Doct. 1. *That to be a Covenant-refuser, is a sin that makes the times perilous.*

Doct. 2. *That to be a Covenant-breaker, is a sin that makes the times perilous.*

Doct. 3. *That to be a peace-hater, or a truce-hater, is a sin that makes the times perilous.*

To begin with the first.

Doct. the first.

Doctrine the first. *That to be a Covenant-refuser, is a sinne that makes the times perilous.* To be *fæderis nescius*, or *infæderabilis*. For the understanding of this, you must know that there are two sorts of Covenants. There are *devillish* and *hellish* Covenants, and there are *godly* and *religious* Covenants. First, there are *devillish* Covenants, such as *Acts 23. 12.* and *Isaiah 28. 15.* such as the *holy league* (as it was unjustly called) in *France* against the *Hugonites*, and that of our Gunpowder

powder Traitors in England: such are our Oxford Covenants for the destruction of the Parliament, and godly party. Now to refuse to take such Covenants, is not to make the times perilous, but the taking of them makes the times perilous. Secondly, there are *godly and religious Covenants*; such as *Job 31. 1. I have made a Covenant with mine eyes, why then should I thinke upon a maid?* Such as *Psal. 119. I have sworne I will perform it, that I will keep thy righteous judgements*; such as *2 Chron. 15. 14.* And such as this is, which you are met to take this day. For you are to sweare to such things which you are bound to endeavour after, though you did not swear. Your swearing is not *solum vinculum*, but *novum vinculum*, is not *the onely*, but onely a *new* and another bond to ty you to the obedience of the things you sweare unto; which are so excellent and so glorious, that if God give those that take it a heart to keep it, it will make these three Kingdomes the glory of the world. And as one of the *Reverend Commissioners of Scotland* said when it was first taken in a most solemn manner at *Westminster*, by the *Parliament* and the *Assembly*; *That if the Pope should have this Covenant written upon a wall over against him sitting in his chair, it would be unto him like the hand-writing to Belhazzar; causing the joints of his loynes to loose, and his knees to smite one against another.* And I may adde, that if it be faithfully and fully kept, it will make all the *Devils in hell* to tremble, as fearing lest their Kingdome should not long stand. Now then for a man to be an *Anti-covenanter*, and to be such a *Covenant-refuser*, it must needs be a sin that makes the times perilous.

And the reason is,

1 Because you shall find in Scripture that when any nation did enter into a solemn religious Covenant, God did exceedingly bleffe and prosper that nation after that time; As appears, *2 Chron. 15. 19. 2 Kings 11. 20.* And we have a promise for it, *Deut. 29. 12, 13. That thou shouldest enter into Covenant with the Lord thy God, &c. That he may establish thee to day for a people unto himselfe, and that he may be unto thee a God, &c.* And therefore to be a *Covenant-refuser*, is to make our miseries perpetuall.

Reason.

1.

2 Because

Reason 2.
Ezek. 16. 8.

2 Because as it is the highest act of *Gods love* to man, to vouchsafe to engage himselfe by *Oath* and *Covenant* to be his God, so it is the highest *demonstration* of mans *love to God*, to bind himselfe by *Oath* and *Covenant* to be Gods. There is nothing obligeth *God* more to us, then to see us willing to *ty* and bind our selves, fast unto his service. And therefore they that in this sense are *Anticovenanters*, are sons of *Belial*; that refuse the yoake of the Lord, that say, as *Psalms*. 2. 3. *Let us breake his bands asunder, and cast away his cords from us*; such as *Oderunt vincula pietatis*, which is a soul-destroying, and land-destroying sin.

Reason 3.

3 Because that the union of *England, Scotland, and Ireland*, into one *Covenant*, is the chief, if not the onely *preservative* of them at this time. You shall find in our *English Chroniclers*, that *England* was never destroyed, but when divided within it self. Our civill divisions brought in the *Romans*, the *Saxons*, *Danes*, and *Normans*. But now the *Anticovenanter*, he divides the Parliament within it self, and the City within it self, and *England* against it self; he is as a *stone separated* from the building, which is of no use to it self, and threatneth the ruine of the building. *Jesus Christ* is called in *Scripture* the *corner-stone*, which is a *stone* that unites two ends of a building together; *Jesus Christ* is a *stone* of union, and therefore they that sow division, and study unjust separation, have little of *Jesus Christ* in them. When the *ten tribes* began to divide from the other two tribes, they presently began to warre one against another, and to ruine one another. The *Anticovenanter* he divides, and separates, and disunites; and therefore he makes the times perilous.

The use is,

I,

I To reprove those that refuse to enter into *Covenant* with God; and more particularly, those that refuse to take this solemne *League and Covenant*. These are of two sorts. 1. Such as refuse it out of *Malignity*: 2. Such as refuse it out of *unnecessary scrupulosity*; that raise and foment doubts, to hinder themselves and others from taking it. As for the first, I will not call your goodnesse and my charity so much in question, as to spend time about them. And for the second, I conceive

conceive that those that scruple it, are amongst the number of those that are absent, and therefore I should but idle away precious time to satisfie the objections of those that are not present, to recover satisfaction.

There are some men of whom I may say as the Apostle doth to the Galatians, Gal. 1.6. *I marvell that you are so soon removed from him that called you, &c.* And as Gal. 4. 15. *I beare you record, that if it had been possible, you would have plucked out your own eyes, and given them to me; Am I therefore become your enemy, &c.* So may I say of many: *I wonder and marvell to see how suddenly they are changed from that good opinion they once had of the Covenant; For I bear the record, that there was a time when they not onely took it willingly, but would have hazarded their very lives in defence of it; How is it then that the Covenant is become an enemy to them, and they unto the Covenant? Surely the change is not in the Covenant, but in the Covenanters.* I have much to say in defence of it, and did say much when it was first taken; which now to repeat will not be usefull, and I believe for the company here present, very unnecessary; and therefore I forbear.

The second use is to exhort you to be Covenant-takers this day, and to take it with these qualifications. *Vsc 2.*

1. *Solemnly, and seriously, and tremblingly; as in Gods presence, Ezra 10. 3.*

2. *With hearty griefe and sorrow for all our former Apostasies and Covenant-breakings, Jer. 50. 4. 5.*

3. *With judgement and understanding, Neh. 10. 28. rightly informed of the true sense and meaning of every particular.*

4. *With a full assurance that it is an act very pleasing unto God, and that God is much honoured by it.*

5. *Freely and cheerfully, as they did, 2 Chron. 15. 14.*

6. *Faithfully and sincerely, with all your hearts and soules, and with your whole desire; 2 Chron. 15. 12. 2 Chron. 34. 31, 32. with a purpose to joyn yourselves to the Lord in a perpetuall Covenant, never to be forgotten. Jer. 50. 5.*

As for motives to perswade you to the practice of these things,

things, and for rules and directions about the manner of taking of it, I shall leave them wholly to my Reverend brother who is to succeed; who will undertake this work fully and at large. My chief aym is at the second doctrine, which is,

Doctrine 2. That for a Covenant-taker to be a Covenant-breaker, is a sin that makes the times perilous.

For the opening of this point, I must distinguish again of Covenants. There are civill, and there are religious Covenants. A civill Covenant, is a Covenant between man and man; and of this the text is primarily, though not onely to be understood. Now for a man to break promise and Covenant with his brother, is a land-destroying, and soule-devouring abomination. We read 2 Sam. 21. that because Saul had broken the Covenant that Joshua made with the Gibeonites, God sent a famine in Davids time of three yeares continuance: To teach us, that if we falsifie our Word and Oath, God will avenge covenant-breaking, though it be forty yeares after. Famous is that text, Jer. 34. 17, 18, 19, 20. Because the Princes and the People brake the covenant which they had made with their servants (though but their servants) God tels them. Because ye have not hearkned unto me in proclaiming liberty every one to his brother, &c. Behold, I proclaim liberty for you, saith the Lord to the sword, to the pestilence, and to the famine; and I will make you to be removed into all the Kingdomes of the earth; &c. We read also Ezek. 17. 18, 19, 20. That God tels Zedekiah because he brake the covenant he had made with the King of Babylon, that therefore he would recompence upon his head the oath that he had despised, and the covenant that he had broken, & would bring him to Babylon, and plead with him there for the trespass which he had trespassed against the Lord. David tels us, Ps. 15. 4. that it is a sin that shuts a man out of heaven. The Turkish histories tell us of a covenant of peace made between Amurath the great Turk, and Ladislaus King of Hungary; and how the Pope absolved Ladislaus from his oath, and provoked him to renew the warre. In which war the Turk being put to the worst, and despairing of victory, puls out a paper which he had in his bosome wherein the league was written; and said, O thou God of the Christians, if thou

thou beest a true God, be revenged of those that without cause have broken the league made by calling upon thy name. And the story saith, that after he had spoken these words, he had as it were a new heart and spirit put into him, and his souldiers, and that they obtained a glorious victory over *Ladislaus*. Thus God avenged the quarrel of mans covenant. The like story we have of *Rodolphus Duke of Suevia*, who by the *Popes* instigation waged war with *Henry the fourth Emperour of Germany*, to whom he had sworn the contrary. The Pope sent a Crown to him with this Motto: *Petra dedit Petro, Petrus diadema Rodolpho*; but in the fight it chanced that *Rodolphus* lost his right hand; and falling sick upon it, he called for it, and said, *Speetate hanc dextram legitima supplicia expendentem, quæ fidem sacramento munitam, & Henrico Domino meo datam, vobis urgentibus, præter æquum & jus temere violavit*. Behold this right hand with which I subscribed to the Emperour, with which I have violated my oath, and therefore I am rightly punished. I will not trouble you in relating the gallant story of *Regulus*, that chose rather to expose himselfe to a cruell death, then to falsifie his oath to the *Carthaginians*. The summe of all is, if it be such a crying abomination to break covenant between man and man, and if such persons are accounted as the off-scouring of men, not worthy to live in a christian, no not in a heathen Common-weal: If it be a sin that drawes down vengeance from heaven, and excludes a man from heaven; much more for a man to enter into a covenant with the great *Jehovah*, and to break such religious engagement; this must needs be a destroying and soul-dāning sin. And of such religious covenants I am now to speak

There are two covenants that God made with man, a covenant of nature, and a covenant of grace. The covenant of nature (or of works) was made with *Adam*, and all mankind in him. This covenant *Adam* broke, and God presently had a quarrell against him for breaking of it, *Gen. 3. 8, 9*. And to avenge the quarrell of the covenant, he was thrust out of *Paradise*; and there was a sword also placed at the East end of the Garden of *Eden*, to avenge covenant-breaking. And by nature we are all children of wrath, heirs of hell, because of the

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breach of that covenant. And therefore we should never think of *originall sin*, or of the *sinfulnesse and cursednesse* of our naturall condition, but we should remember what a grievous *sin Covenant-breaking* is.

But after man was fallen, God was pleased to strike a new covenant, which is usually called a covenant of grace, or of reconciliation; a copy of which you shall read, *Ezek. 16. 7, 8, 9.* This was first propounded to *Adam* by way of promise, *Gen. 3.* *The Seed of the woman shall bruise the Serpents head.* And then to *Abram* by way of Covenant, *Gen. 17.* *In thy Seed shall all the nations of the world be blessed.* And then to *Moses* by way of Testament, *Exod. 33.* It is nothing else but the free and gracious tender of *Iesus Christ* and all his rich purchases to all the lost and undone sons of *Adam*, that shall beleve in him; or, as the phrase is, *Isai. 56. 4.* *that shall take hold of the covenant.* Now you must know that Baptisme is a seal of this covenant, and that all that are baptized, doe sacramentally at least engage themselves to walk before God, and to be upright; and God likewise engageth himself to be their God. This covenant is likewise renewed when we come to the *Lords Supper*, wherein we bind our selves by a sacramentall oath unto thankfulness to God for Christ. Adde further, that besides this generall covenant of grace whereof the Sacraments are seales, there are particular and personall, and family, and nationall covenants. Thus *Job* had his covenant, *Job 20.* and *David*, *Psal. 119. 106.* And when he came to be King, he joyned in a covenant with his people, to serve the Lord. Thus *Asa*, *Iehoiada*, and *Iosiah*, &c. Thus the people of *Israel* had not onely a covenant in *circumcision*, but renewed a covenant in *Horeb*, & in *Moab*; and did often again and again bind themselves to God by vow and covenant. And thus the Churches of the Christians, besides the vow in Baptisme, have many personall and nationall engagements unto God by covenant, which are nothing else but the renovations, and particular applications of that first vow in Baptisme. Of this nature is the covenant you are to renew this day, &c.

Now give me leave to shew you what a *sword-procurer*, and *soul-undoing* sinne, this *sin of Covenant-breaking* is; and then

ethen the reason of it. Famous is that text, *Levit. 26. 25.* *And I will send my sword which shall avenge the quarrell of my covenant.* The words in the Hebrew run thus: I will avenge the avengement. In Greek ἐνδίκησιν ἐνδίκησιν. The Latin, *ulciscar ultionem*; which importeth thus much. That God is at open war and at *publique defiance* with those that break his covenant; he is not onely angry with them, but he will be revenged of them. The Lord hath a controversie with all covenant-breakers, *Hos. 4. 1.* or as it is, *Lev. 26. 23.* The Lord will walk contrary to them. In the 29. of *Deuter.* first God takes his people into covenant, and then he tels them of the happy condition they should bee in if they did keep covenant. But if they did breake covenant, he tels them, *verse 20, 21, 22, 23, 24, 25.* *That the Lord will not spare him; but the anger of the Lord and his jealousies shall smoe against that man, and all the curses that are written in this book shall lie upon him, and the Lord shall blot out his name from under heaven. And the Lord shall separate him, &c. And when the nations shall say, Wherefore hath the Lord done thus unto this land? What meaneth the heat of this great anger? Then shall men say, Because they have forsaken the covenant of the Lord God of their Fathers, &c.* This was the sin that caused God to send his people of Israel into captivity, and to remove the candlestick from the Asian Churches. It is for this sin that the sword is now devouring Germany, Ireland, and England, &c. God hath sent his sword to avenge the quarrell of his covenant.

The reasons why this sin is a God-provoking sin are,

Reason 1.

Because that to sinne against the covenant, is a greater sinne then to sin against a *Commandement* of God, or to sin against a *promise*, or to sin against an *Ordinance* of God. First, it is a greater sin then to break a *Commandement* of God. For the more mercy there is in the thing we sin against, the greater is the sin. Now there is more mercy in a *Covenant*, then in a bare *Commandement*. The *Commandement* tels us our duty, but gives no power to doe it. But the covenant of grace gives power to doe what it requires to be done. And therefore if it be a hell-procuring sin to break the least of Gods *Commandements*,

dements, much more to be a Covenant-breaker, *Heb. 10. 28, 29.* Secondly, it is a greater sin then to sin against a *promise* of God, because a Covenant is a promise joyn'd with an oath, it is a mutuall stipulation between God and us. And therefore if it be a great sin to break promise, much more to break covenant. Thirdly, it is a greater sin then to sin against an *Ordinance*, because the *Covenant* is the root and ground of all the *Ordinances*. It is by virtue of the *Covenant* that we are made partakers of the *Ordinances*. The *Word* is the *book* of the *Covenant*, and the *Sacraments* are the *Scales* of the *Covenant*. And if it be a sin of an high nature to sin against the book of the *Covenant* and the *seales* of the *Covenant*, much more against the *Covenant* it selfe. To break covenant is a *fundamentall sinne*, it raseth the very *foundation of Christianity*, because the *Covenant* is the *foundation* of all the *priviledges*, and *prerogatives*, and *hopes* of the *Saints* of God. And therefore we reade, *Ephes. 2. 12.* that a *stranger from the Covenant* is one *without hope*. All hope of Heaven is cut off where the *Covenant* is willingly broken. To break covenant is an *universall sin*, it includes all other sins. By virtue of the *Covenant*, we tye our selves to the obedience of Gods *Commandements*, we give up our selves to the guidance of *Jesus Christ*, we take him for our *Lord and King*. All the *promises* of this life and that that is to come, are contained within the *Covenant*. The *Ordinances* are fruits of the *Covenant*. And therefore they that forsake the *Covenant*, commit *many sins in one*, and bring not only many, but all curses upon their heads. The summe of the first Argument is: *If the Lord will avenge the quarrell of his Commandement*, if God was avenged upon the *stick-gatherer* for breaking the *Sabbath*, much more will he be avenged upon a *Covenant-breaker*. If God will avenge the quarrell of a *promise*, if the quarrell of an *Ordinance*: if they that reject the *Ordinances* shall be punished; *Of how much severer punishment shall they be thought worthy, that trample under their feet the blood of the Covenant?* If God was avenged of those that abused the *Ark* of the *Covenant*, much more will he punish those that abuse the *Angell* of the *Covenant*.
The

The second reason why *covenant-breaking* is such a Land- Reason 2. destroying sin is, because it is a most solemne and serious thing to enter into *covenant with God*; a matter of such great weight and importance, that it is impossible but God should be exceedingly provoked with those that slight it and disrespect it. The Vow in *Baptisme* is the *first*, the most generall and the solemnest vow that ever any Christian took, saith *Chrysostome*; wherein he doth not only promise, but engage himselfe by covenant in the sight of God and his holy Angels to be the servant of Jesus Christ, and therefore God will not hold him guiltless that breaks this vow. The solemnity & weightinesse of covenant-taking consisteth in three things.

1. Because it is made with the glorious *Majesty* of Heaven and Earth, who will not be trifled and baffled withall. And therefore what *Jehosaphat* said to his Judges, 2 *Chron.* 19.6. *Take heed what you doe, for ye judge not for men, but for the Lord, who is with you in judgements; wherefore now let the fear of the Lord be upon you, &c.* The like I may say to every one that enters into covenant this day. *Take heed what you doe, for it is the Lords covenant, and there is no iniquity with the Lord, wherefore now let the fear of the Lord be upon you. For our God is a holy God, he is a jealous God, he will not forgive your transgressions, nor your sins, as Joshua saith, Josh. 24.19.*

2. Because the articles of the Covenant are weighty and of great importance. In the Covenant of grace God inga- geth himself to give Christ, and with him, all temporall, spirituall, and eternall blessings, and we engage our selves to be his faithfull servants all our dayes. In this Covenant we oblige our selves to do great matters that neerly concerne the glory of God, the good of our own soules, and the happinesse of three Kingdomes. And in such holy and heavenly things which so neerly concerne our everlasting estate, to dally and trifle must needs incense the anger of the great *Jehovah*.

3. The manner used both by *Jewes, Heathen, and Christians*, in entring into Covenant, doth clearly set out the weightinesse of it, and what a horrible sin it is to break it. The custome amongst the *Jewes* will appear by divers texts of Scripture :

Gen. 15. 10.
17, 18,

ture: Jer. 34. 18. it is said, *And I will give the men that have transgressed my covenant, which have not performed the worde of the Covenant which they had made before me, when they cut the Calfe in twain, and passed between the parts thereof. The words they used when they passed between the parts were, So God divide me, if I keep not covenant. Neh. 5. 12. Nehemiah took an oath of the Priests, and shook his lap and said, So God shake out every man from his house, and from his labour, that performeth not this promise, even thus be he shaken out and emptied. And all the Congregation said, Amen. In the 15 of Genesis Abraham divided the Heifer, and shee-Goat, and a Ram, &c. And when the Sun was down, a smoaking furnace and burning lampe passed between these pieces. This did represent Gods presence, saith Clemens Alexandrinus, and it was as if God should say: Behold, this day I enter into covenant with thee, and if thou keepest covenant, I will be as a burning lampe to illighten and to comfort thee: But if thou breakest covenant, I will be like a smoaking furnace to consume thee. Thus also Exod. 24. 6. Moses makes a covenant with Israel, and offers sacrifices, and takes the blood of the sacrifice and divides it, and half of it he sprinkles upon the Altar, (which represented Gods part) and the other half he sprinkled upon the people, as if he should say, *As this blood is divided, so will God divide you if you break covenant.* This was the custome amongst the Jewes. Amongst the Romans, *Casa firmabant fœdera porca.* And when it was divided, the *Feciales* gave one half to one party, and the other half to the other, and said, *So God divide you asunder if you break this covenant, and let God doe this so much the more by how much he is the more able. Hinc fœdus à fœdo animali (scilicet porco) diviso.* Sometimes they did make covenants by taking a stone in their hands and saying, *If I make this covenant seriously and faithfully, then let the great Jupiter blesse me. If not, so let me be cast away from the face of the Gods as I cast away this stone.* This was called *Jurare per Jovem lapidem.* All these things are not empty notions, and metaphoricall shadowes, but reall and substantiall practises, signifying unto us, That God will, and must (for it stands with his honor to do it) divide and break them in pieces that*

that break covenant with him. This day you are to take a Covenant by the lifting up of your hands unto the most high God, which is a most emphaticall ceremony, whereby we do as it were call God to be a *witnesse* and a *judge* of what we do, and a *rewarder* or a *revenger*, according as we keep or break the Covenant. If we keep it, *the lifting up of our hands* will be as an *Evening sacrifice*; if we break it, *the lifting up of our hands* will be as the *lifting up of the hands of a Malefactor at the Bar*, and procure woe and misery and wringing of hands at the great day of appearing.

The third reason why God will be avenged of those that are Covenant-breakers, is, because that a *Covenant* is the *greatest obligation*, and the most forcible *chain* that can be invented to tye us to obedience and service. God may justly challenge obedience without *covenanting* by virtue of *creation*, *preservation*, and *redemption*; he hath made us, and when lost, he hath purchased us with his blood. But being willing more abundantly to manifest his love, and that we might be the more fastned to him, he hath tyed himself to us, and us to him by the strong bond of a *Covenant*; as if God should say, Oh ye sons of men, I see you are rebellious, and sons of *Belial*, and therefore if it be possible, I will make you sure. I will engage you unto me, not only by *creation*, *preservation* and *redemption*, but also by the right of *covenant* and *association*. I will make you mine by *promise* and *oath*. And surely he that will break these bonds, is as bad as the man possessed with the *Devill* in the *Gospel*, whom no chaines could keep fast. When we enter into covenant with God, we take the oath of *Supremacy*, and swear unto him that he shall be our chief *Lord* and *Governour*, and that we will admit of no forein power or jurisdiction, but that God shall be all in all. We likewise take the oath of *Allegiance* to be his servants and vassals, and that he shall be our Supream in spirituals and temporals. Now for a *Christian* that believes there is a God, to break both these oathes of *allegiance* and *supremacy*, it is cursed *treason* against the God of heaven, which surely God will be avenged of. Amongst the *Romans*, when any Souldier was pressed, he took an oath to serve his Captaine
D faith-

faithfully, and not to forsake him, and he was called *Miles per sacramentum*. Sometimes one took an oath for all the rest, and the others only said, *The same oath that A. B. took, the same do I*. And these were called *Milites per conjurationem*, or *milites evocati*. And when any souldier forsook his Captain, he had Martiall law executed upon him. Thus it is with every Christian: He is a professed souldier of Christ, he hath taken presse-money, he hath sworn and taken the *Sacrament* upon it to become the *Lords*, he is *miles per sacramentū*, & *miles per conjurationem*. And if he forsake his Captaine and break covenant, the great *Lord of Hosts* will be avenged of him, as it is written, *Jer. 11. 3. Cursed be the man that obeyeth not the words of this covenant*. To break covenant is a sin of perjury, which is a sin of a high nature; and if for oathes the *Land mourneth*, much more for breach of oathes. To break covenant is a sin of spirituall adultery; for by covenanting with God we do as it were joyne our selves in marriage to God, as the Hebrew word signifieth, *Jer. 50. 5*. Now to break the marriage knot is a sin for which God may justly give a Bill of divorce to a Nation. To break covenant is a sin of injustice; for by our covenant we do enter as it were into bond to God, and engage our selves as a creditor to his debtor. Now the sin of injustice is a *Land-destroying sin*.

Reason 4.

The fourth reason why God must needs be avenged of those that are *covenant-breakers*, is, because it is an act of the highest *Sacriledge* that can be committed. For by virtue of the *Covenant* the Lord layes claime to us as his peculiar inheritance, *Ezek. 16. 8. I sware unto thee, and entred into covenant with thee, and thou becamest mine. Jer. 31. 33. I will be their God and they shall be my people*. It is worthy observation, that in the *Covenant* there is a double *surrender*, one on Gods part, another on our part. God Almighty makes a *surrender* of himself, and of his *Sonne*, and of the *Holy Ghost*. Behold, saith God, I am wholly thy God; all my power, and wisdom, and mercy, and goodnesse, &c. is all thine, my *Son* is thine, and all his rich purchases. My *spirit* is thine and all his graces. This is Gods *surrender*. On our parts, when we take hold of the *Covenant*, we make a delivery of our bodies and

and soules into the hands of God, we choose him to be our Lord and Governour, we resigne up our selves into his hands. Lord we are thine at thy disposing; we alienate our selves from our selves, and make a Deed of gift of our selves, and give thee the lock and key of head, heart, and affections, &c. This is the nature of every religious Covenant, but especially of the Covenant of grace. But now for a Christian to call in as it were his *surrender*, to disclaime his *resignation*, to steale away himself from God and to lay claim to himself after his alienation; to fulfill his owne lusts, to walk after his owne wayes, to do what he lists, and not what he hath covenanted to do, and so to rob God of what is his, this is the *highest degree of Sacrilege*, which God will never suffer to go unpunished. And surely if the stick-gatherer, that did but alienate a little of Gods time; and *Ananias* and *Sapphira*, that withheld but some part of their estate: and if *Belsazzar* for abusing the consecrated vessels of the Temple were so grievously punished; how much more will God punish those that alienate themselves from the service of that God to whom they have sworn to be obedient? It is observed by a learned Author, of three famous Commanders of the *Romans*, that they never prospered after they had defiled and robbed the Temple of *Jerusalem*. First, *Pompey* the great, he went into the *Sanctum Sanctorum*, a place never before entred by any but the *High Priest*, and the Lord blasted him in all his proceedings after that time. *Vt ille qui terram non habuit ante ad victoriam, deesset illi terra ad sepulturam*: That he that before that time wanted earth to overcome, had not at last earth enough to bury him withall. The next was *Crassus*, who took away 10000 talents of gold from the Temple, and afterwards dyed, by having gold poured down his throat. The third was *Cassius*, who afterwards killed himself. If then God did thus avenge himself of those that polluted his consecrated Temple; much more will he not leave them unpunished that are the *living temples* of the *Holy Ghost*, consecrated to God by a covenant, and afterwards prove *sacrilegious*, robbing God of that worship and service which they have sworn to give him.

Reason 5.

The fifth reason why this sin makes the times perilous is, because *covenant-breakers* are reckoned amongst the number of those that have the *mark* of *reprobation* upon them. I do not say that they are all *Reprobates*; yet I say that the *Apostle* makes it to be one of those sins which are committed by those that are given up to a reprobate minde, *Rom. 1. 28. 31.* The words are spoken of the *Heathen*, and are to be understood of breaking of covenants made between man and man. But then the Argument will hold *a fortiori*. If it be the brand of a reprobate to break covenant with man, much more to break a *covenant* made with the great *Jehovah* by the lifting up of our hands to Heaven.

Reason 6.

The last reason is, because it is a sin against such infinite mercy, such bowels of Gods unexpressible mercy. It is said, *Jer. 31. 32. Which covenant they brake, although I was a Husband to them.* That is; Although I had chosen them for my Spouse, and married my self unto them with an everlasting covenant of mercy, and intailed Heaven upon them, yet they have broken my covenant. This was a great provocation. Thus *Ezek. 16. 4, 5. When thou wast in thy blood and no eye pitied thee to have compassion upon thee, I said unto thee when thou wert in thy blood, Live; yea, I said unto thee, Live.* It is twice repeated. As if God should say, Mark it O Israel, when no eye regarded thee, then I said unto thee, Live. Behold, saith God, verse 8. *Thy time was the time of love.* Behold and wonder at it, and I spread my skirt over thee, and covered thy nakedness: yea, I swore unto thee, and entred into covenant with thee, saith the Lord, and thou becamest mine. And yet for all this thou hast sinned grievously against me. *Woe, woe unto thee, saith the Lord God, Ezek. 16. 23.* There is a fivefold mercy in the Covenant, (especially in the covenant of grace) that makes the sinne of covenant-breaking to be so odious.

1. It is a mercy that the great God will vouchsafe to enter into covenant with dust and ashes. As *David* saith in another case, *Is it a sleight matter to be the son in law of a King?* So may I say, *Is it a sleight matter for the Lord of Heaven and Earth to condescend so far as to covenant with his poor creatures,*

creatures, and thereby to become their *debtors*, and to make them as it were his *equals*? When *Jonathan* and *David* entered into a covenant of friendship, though one was a Kings son, the other a poor Shepherd, yet there was then a kinde of equality between them. But this must be understood warily, according to that text *2 Cor. 1.9. Blessed be God who hath called us into the fellowship of his Son Jesus Christ our Lord.* He is still our Lord, though in fellowship with us. It is a covenant of infinite condescension on Gods part, whereby he enters into a league of friendship with his people.

2. The mercy is the greater, because this *covenant* was made after the fall of *Adam*; after we had broken the first covenant. That the Lord should try us the second time, is not only an act of infinite goodnesse in God, but of infinite mercy. There is a difference between the *goodnesse* and the *mercy* of God. *Goodnesse* may be shewed to those that are not in *misery*: but *mercy* supposeth *misery*. And this was our condition after the breach of the first *covenant*.

3. That *God* should make this covenant with *Man*, and not with *Devils*.

4. This sets out the mercy of the *covenant*, because it contains such rare and glorious benefits, and therefore it is called a *covenant of life and peace*, *Mal. 2. 5. an everlasting covenant, even the sure mercies of David*, *Esay 55. 3.* It is compared to the *waters of Noah*, *Esay 54. 9.* Famous are those two texts, *Exod. 19. 5, 6. Jer. 32. 40, 41.* Texts that hold forth *strong consolation*. By virtue of the *covenant*, Heaven is not only made possible, but certain to all believers, and certain by way of *oath*. It is by virtue of the *covenant* that we call God *Father*; and may lay claim to all the power, wisdom, goodnesse, and mercy, &c. that is in God. As *Iehoshaphat* told the King of *Israel*, to whom he was joyned in covenant, *I am as thou art, my people as thy people, my horses as thy horses*: So doth God say to all that are in *covenant* with him; *My power is thine, my goodnesse is thine, &c.* By virtue of this *covenant*, whatsoever thou wantest, God cannot deny it thee, if it be good for thee. Say unto God, *Lord, thou hast sworne to take away my heart of stone, and to give me a heart of flesh.*

Thou hast sworn to write thy law in my heart, thou hast sworn to circumcise my heart, thou hast sworn to give me Christ to be my King, Priest, and Prophet, &c. And God cannot but be a covenant-keeper. By virtue of this covenant, God cannot but accept of a poor penitent sinner laying hold upon Christ for pardon, 2 Chron. 7. 14. Jer. 3. 14. *Promissa hæc tua sunt, Domine; & quis falli timet cum promittit ipsa veritas?* In a word, we may challenge pardon, and heaven by our covenant; 1 John 1. 9. God is not only mercifull, but just to forgive us. We may challenge heaven through Christ out of justice.

5. Adde lastly, that the conditions of the Covenant on our parts should be upon such easie termes, therefore it is called a Covenant of Free-grace. All that God requires of us, is to take hold of this Covenant; *Is. 56. to receive this gift of righteousness, Rom. 5. to take all Christ as he is tendered in the Covenant.* And that which is the greatest consolation of all, God hath promised in his Covenant to do our part for us. *Jer. 31. 33, 34.* Therefore it is called a Testament rather than a Covenant. (In the new Testament the word διαθήκη is alwayes used by the Apostle, and not συνθήκη) Heaven is conveyed unto the elect by way of Legacie; It is part of Gods Testament to write his law in our hearts, and to cause us to walk in his wayes, &c. Put these things together. Seeing there is such infinite mercy in the Covenant. A mercy for God to enter into Covenant with us, to doe it with us and not the Angels, with us fallen, with us upon such easie termes; and to make such a Covenant, that contains so many, and not only so, but all blessings here and hereafter in the wombe of it; it must needs be a land-destroying and soul-destroying sin to be a Covenant-breaker.

The use and application of this doctrine is foure-fold.

Use 1.
Of information.

If it be such a Land-devouring sin to be a Covenant-breaker, let us from hence learn the true cause of all the miseries that have hapned unto England in these late yeers. The wombe, out of which all our calamities are come. England hath broken Covenant with God, and now God is breaking England in pieces, even as a Potter breakes a vessell in pieces. God hath sent his sword to avenge the quarrell of his Covenant. As Christ whipt

whipt the buyers and sellers out of the Temple, with whips, made of the cords which they brought to tye their oxen and sheep withall. A *Covenant* is a cord to ty us to God, and now God hath made an iron whip of these cords which we have broken asunder to whip us withall.

We are a nation in *Covenant with God*, we have the *books of the Covenant*, the Old and New Testament; we have the *seales of the Covenant*, Baptisme, and the Lords Supper. We have the *Messengers of the Covenant*, the Ministers of the Gospell. We have the *Angell of the covenant*, the Lord Jesus Christ fully and clearly set out before us in the Ministry of the Word. But alas, are not these blessings amongst us, as the Ark was amongst the *Philistines*, rather as *prisoners*, then as *priviledges*; rather *in testimonium & ruinam, quam in salutem*, rather for our *ruine*, then for our *happinesse*? May it not be said of us, as Reverend *Moulin* said of the French Protestants; *While they burned us* (saith he) *for reading the Scriptures, we burnt with zeale to be reading of them: now with our liberty is bred also negligence and disesteem of Gods word*? So it is with us. While we were under the *Tyranny of the Bishops*, oh how sweet was a *Fasting-day*! how *beautifull were the feet of them that brought the Gospell of peace unto you*? How dear and precious were Gods people one to another, &c. But now how are our *Fasting-dayes* sleighted and vilified? how are the people of God divided one from another, railing upon (instead of lovning) one another? And is not the *godly Ministry* as much persecuted by the tongues of some that would be accounted godly, as heretofore by the *Bishops hands*? Is not the *Holy Bible* by some rather *wrested* then *read*? wrested I say by ignorant and unstable soules, to their own destruction. And as for the *seales of the covenant*. First, for the *Lords Supper*; How often have we spilt the *bloud of Christ* by our unworthy approaches to his Table? and hence it is, that he is now spilling our blood. How hard a matter is it to obtain power to keep the blood of Christ from being profaned by ignorant and scandalous Communicants? and can we think that God will be easily intreated to sheath up his bloody sword, and to cease shedding our blood? Secondly, for the
Sacrament

Sacrament of Baptisme; How cruell are men grown to their little infants, by keeping of them from the seale of entrance into the *Kingdome of heaven*, and making their children (their own children) to be just in the same condition with the children of *Turks and Infidels*? I remember at the beginning of these warres, there was a great fear fell upon godly people about their little children, and all their care was for their preservation, and their safety; and for the continuance of the *Gospell* to them, &c. But now our little children are likely to be in a worser condition then ever. The Oxford Army labour to steale away the *Gospell* from them, and the *Anabaptist* labours to steale away the *seale of the covenant of Grace* from them; and that which is worser then all, there are some godly people love to have it so. And all this is come upon us as a just punishment of our *Baptismall covenant-breaking*. And as for *Iesus Christ* who is the *Angell of the covenant*: are there not some amongst us that *un-god Iesus Christ*? and is it not fit and equall that *God* should *un-church* us, and *un-people* us? Are there not thousands that have sworne to be *Christ's servants*, and yet are in their lives the *Vassals of sin and Satan*? And shall not *God* be avenged of such a nation as this? These things considered, it is no wonder our miseries are so great, but the wonder is, that they are no greater.

Use 2.
Of examination, whether we be covenant-breakers or no.

First for the Covenant we make in Baptisme.

The second use, is an use of examination.

Dayes of *humiliation* ought to be dayes of *self-examination*. Let us therefore upon such a day as this is, examine whether we be not amongst the number of those that make the times perilous, whether we be not *covenant-breakers*? Here I will speak of three covenants: First, of the covenant we made with *God* in our *Baptisme*. Secondly, of the covenants which we have made with *God* in our *distresses*. Thirdly, and especially of this covenant which you are to renew this day.

First, of the covenant which we made in *Baptisme*, and renew every time we come to the *Lords Supper*, and upon our solemn dayes of fasting. There are none here, but I may say of them, The *vowes of God* are upon you. You are *servi nati, empti, jurati*; you are the *born, bought, and sworn servants* of *God*,

God, you have made a surrender of your selves unto God and Christ. The question I put to you is this: How often have you broke covenant with God? It is said, *Isaiah 33. 14. The sinners of Sion are afraid: who shall dwell with everlasting burnings? Who shall dwell with devouring fire, &c.* When God comes to a Church-sinner, to a sinner under the Old Testament, much more to a Christian sinner; a sinner under the New Testament: and layeth to his charge his often covenant-breaking, fearfulnesse shall possesse him, and he will cry out, Oh! woe is me, who can dwell with everlasting burnings? our God is a consuming fire, and we are as stubble before him. Who can stand before his indignation? (Nahum 1.6.) Who can abide in the fiercenesse of his anger? When his fury is poured forth like fire, and the rockes are throwne down before him. Who can stand? Of all sorts of creatures, a sinfull Christian shall never be able to stand before the Lord, when he comes to visit the world for their sins. For when a christian sinnes against God, he sins not only against the Commandement, but against the covenant. And in every sin he is a commandement-breaker, and a covenant-breaker. And therefore whereas the Apostle saith, *Tribulation and anguish upon every soule that sinneth, but first upon the Jew; &c.* I may adde; First upon the christian, then upon the Jew, and then upon the Grecian; because the covenant made with the Christian is called a better covenant; and therefore his sins have a higher aggravation in them. There is a notable passage in *Austin*, in which he brings the Devill thus pleading with God against a wicked christian at the day of judgement. *Aequissime judex, judica quod aequum est, judica meum esse qui tuus esse noluit post renunciationem; Vt quid invasit pannos meos? Quid apud eum lascivia, incontinentia, &c. quibus ipse renunciaverit? Quid intemperantia, quid gula, quid fastus, quid cetera mea? Hac omnia mea post renunciationem invasit, Meus esse voluit, mea concupivit; Judica, aequissime judex, quoniam quem tu non dedignatus es tantopretio liberare, ipse mihi postmodum voluit obligare.* That is, Oh thou righteous Judge, give right judgement! Judge him to be mine, who refused to be thine even after he had renounced me in his Baptisme; What had he to doe to wear my

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Livery?

Livery? What had he to doe with gluttony, drunkenesse, pride, wantonnesse, incontinencie; and the rest of my ware? All these things he hath practised since he renounced the devill and all his works. Mine he is, judge righteous judgement; For he whom thou hast not disdained to dye for, hath obliged himselfe to me by his sins, &c.

Now what can God say to this charge of the Devils, but, *Take him Devill*, seeing he would be thine; take him, *torment him with everlasting torments*? Cyprian brings in the Devill thus speaking to Christ at the great day of judgement, *Ego pro istis quos mecum vides nec alapas accepi, nec flagella sustinui, nec crucem pertuli, nec sanguinem fudi, sed nec regnum coeleste illis promitto, nec ad paradysum evoco, & tamen se mihi suaq; omnia consecrarunt*. I have not (saith the Devill) been whipt and scourged, and crucified, neither have I shed my blood for these whom thou seest with me. I do not promise them a kingdome of heaven, &c. and yet these men have wholly consecrated themselves to me and my service. Indeed if the Devill could make such gainfull covenants with us, and bestow such glorious mercies upon us as are contained within the Covenant, our serving of Satan and sinne might have some excuse. But when as his covenant is a covenant of bondage, death, hell, and damnation: and Gods covenant is a covenant of liberty, grace, and eternall happinesse, it must needs be a sin inexcusable, to be willingly and wilfully such a covenant-breaker.

Concerning
our voves to
God in our di-
stresse.

Secondly, let us examine concerning the *voves* which we have made to God in our *distresses*: in our Personall distresses, and our Nationall distresses. Are we not like the children of Israel of whom it is said, *Psal. 78. 34. When he slew them, then they sought him, and they returned and enquired early after God, &c. Nevertheless they did but flatter him with their mouth, &c. for their heart was not right with him, neither were they stedfast in his covenant?* Are we not like unto little children, that while they are whipping will promise any thing, but when the whipping is over will perform nothing? Or like unto Iron that is very soft and malleable while it is in the fire, but when it is taken out of the fire, returns presently

sently to his former hardnesse? This was *Jacobs* fault: He made a *vow* when he was in distresse, *Gen. 28. 22.* But he forgot his covenant, and God was angry with him, and chastised him in his daughter *Dinah*, *Gen. 34. 5.* and in his two sons *Simeon and Levi*. And at last God himself was fain to call to him from Heaven to keep covenant. And after that time God blessed *Jacob* exceedingly, *Gen. 35. 9, 10, 11, 12.* We reade of *David*, *Psal. 66. 13, 14, 15.* that he professeth of himself, that he would go into Gods house, and pay the *vowes* which his lips had uttered, and his mouth had spoken when he was in trouble. But how few are there that imitate *David* in this thing?

Thirdly, let us examine our selves concerning the solemne League and Covenant which we are to renew this day. And here I demand an answer to these questions.

Concerning
the solemne
League and
Covenant.
Questions a-
bout the Co-
venant.
Quest. 1.

1. Are there not many amongst us that scorn it and speak reproachfully of it? That deal with it as the Children of *Israel* did with Manna, which at first they did so highly value, as that they could not be kept within doors from gathering of it, no not upon the Sabbath day; but afterwards they came to loathe it as much as ever before they loved it. And do not we deal so with the Covenant?

2. Are there not some that write against it, and that say in effect, That the *perjury* that is committed about it, is rather in taking of it then in breaking of it, and that it was not a right, but a rash oath? which I speak not only to the shame of those that write thus, but also to the shame of those that suffer such things to be written and to go unquestioned.

Quest. 2.

3. Are there not some that put corrupt glosses upon it, and deale falsely in the Covenant? that say, that by virtue of the Covenant all Ministers are bound to renounce their ministry, (even that ministry which God hath blessed and put his seale unto by the conversion of thousands) and either to take it up again by Ordination from the people; or if we finde no warrant in the Word for that way, then to turn Seekers, and to wait till God send Apostles to ordain Ministers? And yet these men cannot but know that the Parliament in their Ordinance for Ordination of Ministers, have declared, that this is not the meaning of the Covenant. Others there are that

Quest. 3.

say, That by virtue of the *Covenant* no man ought to pay *tythes* to his *Minister* unlesse he will incurre the sin of *perjury*. These men may as well say, That by the *Covenant* no *Tenant* ought to pay rent to his *Landlord*, and that no man ought to keep the laws of the Realm. For we challenge our *tythes* by virtue of the Laws established, &c. We challenge a sufficient maintenance by *Gods* law. But as for the *tenth part* (though there are some that say much out of the Scripture for it) yet we require it as due only by the laws of the Kingdome.

Quest. 4.

4. Are there not some that deal *hypocritically* in the *Covenant*? that take it meerly to serve their own turns, to save their credits, or to save their estates, or to hide their *malig-nancy*? That are like unto the *Samaritans*, of whom it is reported, that when the *Jewes* were in adversity, they would renounce the Jewish religion and all alliance with them: but when the *Jewes* were in prosperity, then they would pretend kindred, and professe themselves to be of the *Jewish Religion*. Just so do many *Oxford-malignants* deal with the *Parliament*. While we are in prosperity, they are *Covenant-ers*, and for the *Parliament*. But if ever *God* should bring us again into a low condition, they would quickly appear to be *Anti-covenanters* and *Anti-parliamenters*. I have heard a story of a *Gaoler*, that being required either to take the *Covenant*, or to leave his place; he consulted with his fellow drunkard about it; and he answered, That he could not deny but that the taking of the *Covenant* was a very bitter pill: but seeing there was no remedy, his advice was, *To swallow it down and not to think on it*. And shall not *God* be avenged of such a Nation as this?

But the great question, and that which doth most nearly concerne us that are here, is;

Quest. 5.

5. Are we not *Covenant-breakers*? Do we not make the times perilous by our falsifying of our oath and *covenant with God*?

In our *Covenant* we swear to six things.

Six things
sworn unto in
the *Covenant*.

1. That we will endeavour to be *humbled for our own sins and for the sins of the Kingdome*. But where shall we finde a

more-

mourner in England for his own abominations, and for the abominations that are committed in the midst of us? It is easie to finde a *Censurer* of the sins of the Land, but hard to finde a true mourner for the sins of the Land.

Secondly, we swear *that we will endeavour to goe before one another in the example of a reall Reformation*. But who makes conscience of this part of the Oath? What sin hast thou left, or in what one thing hast thou bin reformed since thou tookest this Covenant? We read, *Ezra 10. 3. That they entred into Covenant, to put away their wives & their children by them:* which was a very difficult and hard duty, and yet they did it. But what bosome sin, what beloved sin, as dear to thee as thy dear wife and children, hast thou left for Gods sake since thou tookest this Oath? I read *Nehem. 5. 13.* that the people took an Oath to make *restitution*, which was a costly duty, and yet they performed it, saith the Text. But alas! where is the man that hath made *restitution* of his ill gotten goods since he took this Covenant? I reade, *2 Chron. 15. 16.* that King *Asa* deposed his mother *Maachab*, her, even her, from being *Queen*, after he had entred into Covenant: and that the people, *2 Kings 11. 18.* after they had sworn a Covenant, brake in pieces all the *Altars of Baal* thoroughly. But where is this thorough Reformation, this thorough amendment of life? Indeed here is much talk of a Reformation, but little practice of a Reformation. We say we fight for a Reformation; but I fear lest in a little time we should fight away all our Reformation: or if not fight it away, yet we should dispute it away. For now all our religion is turned into *Vtrum's*, into *Questions*, insomuch as that there are some that call all religion into question, and in a little while will lose all religion in the crowd of questions. *Inter disputandum veritas, & religio amittitur.* There was a time not many years agoe, when God did blesse our Ministry in the City, to the Conversion of many people unto God; but now there are many that study more to gain parties to themselves, then to gain souls to God. The great work of Conversion is little thought on. And never so few (if any at all) converted as in these days wherein we talk so much of Reformation. And is this to keep Covenant with God? 3. We

3. We sweare to endeavour to amend the lives, and reforme not only our selves, but all those that are under our charge. But where is this Family-reformation? Indeed I reade of *Jacob*, that when he went to perform his vow and covenant, he first reformed his family, *Gen. 35. 3*. And that *Joshua* resolved (and performed it) for himself and his family to serve the Lord. And so did *Josiah*, *2 Chron. 34*. And oh that I could adde, *And so do we!* But the wickednesses committed in our families, proclaim the contrary to all the world. What *Noblemans*, what *Aldermans*, what *Merchants* family is more reformed since the Covenant, then before? We speak and contend much for a *Church-reformation*; but how can there be a *Church-reformation*, unlesse there be first a *Family-reformation*? What though the *Church-worship* be pure, yet if the *worshippers* be impure, God will not accept of the *worship*? And if families be not reformed, how will your *worshippers* be pure?

4. We swear to endeavour to bring the Churches of God in the three Kingdomes, to the nearest conjunction and uniformity in Religion, confession of Faith, form of Church-government, Directory for worship and catechizing, &c. But are there not some that write against an *Uniformity* in Religion, and call it an *Idoll*? Are there not many that walk professedly contrary to this clause of the Covenant? There are three texts of Scripture that people keep the quite contrary way. The first is, *Mat. 6. 34. 31. 25*. Take no thought what you shall eat, &c. take no thought for to morrow. And most people take thought for nothing else. The second text is, *Matth. 6. 33*. Seek ye first the kingdom of God and his righteousness, &c. And most people seek this last of all. The third text is, *John 6. 27*. Labour not for the meat that perisheth, but for the meat that endureth for ever, &c. And most people labour not for the meat that endureth for ever, but for the meat that perisheth. As these three texts are kept, so do many people keep this part of the Oath; for there were never more divisions and differences in the Church, never more difformity, and pleading against *Uniformity*, then now there is.

5. We swear to endeavour the extirpation of Popery, Prelacy,

lacy, Superstition, Heresie, Schisme, &c. And yet notwithstanding there are some that have taken this Oath, that contend earnestly for a *Toleration of all Religions*: which (as I conceive) is as contrary to this clause of the Covenant as *Heaven is to Hell.*

6. *We swear against a detestable indifferency and Neutrality in this cause which so much concerneth the glory of God, &c.* And yet how many are there amongst us that are like unto *Gallio*, that care not what becomes of the *cause of God*, so they may have peace and quiet? That will not be the *backwardest* of all, and yet will be sure not to be too *forward*, for fear lest if the times turn, they should be noted amongst the chief of the *faction*? That are very indifferent which side prevaile, so they may have their trading again? That say as the *Polititian*, *That they will be carefull not to come too near the heels of Religion, lest it should dash out his braines*: And as the *King of Arragon* told *Beza*, *That he would wade no farther into the sea of Religion, then he could safely return back to shoar*?

In all these six particulars let us seriously search and try our hearts, whether we be not amongst the number of those that make the times perilous.

The third use is for *Humiliation*. Let the consideration of our *Covenant-breaking*, be a *heart-breaking* consideration to every one of us this day. Let this be a mighty and powerfull Argument to humble us upon this day of *Humiliation*.

Use 3.
Of Humiliation.

There are five considerations that are exceedingly *soul-humbling*, if God bleſſe them unto us.

1. The consideration of the many *Commandements* of God that we have often and often broken.

Five soul-humbling considerations.

2. The consideration of the *breaking* of *Iesus Christ* for our sins, how he was rent and torn for our iniquities.

3. The consideration of the *breaking of the bread*, and the *pouring out of the wine* in the Sacrament, which is a heart-breaking motive and help.

4. The *broken condition* that the *Kingdome of England, Scotland, and Ireland*, and that *Germany* is in at this time.

5. The many *Vowes and Covenants* that we have broken; our *Sacrament-Covenants*, our *Fasting-Covenants*, our *Sick-bed-*

bed-covenants. And especially the consideration of our often breaking of our *Nationall-covenant* which you come this day to renew. This is a sin in *Folio*, a sin of a *high nature*: and if ever God awaken conscience in this life, a sin that will lye like a heaue *Incuba* upon it. A greater sin then a sin against a *Commandement*, or against an *Ordinance*. A sin not only of *disobedience*, but of *perjury*. A sin of *injustice*, of *spirituall adultery*. A sin of *Sacrilege*. A sin of great *unkindnesse*. A sin that makes us not only *disobedient*, but *dishonest*. For we account him a dishonest man that keeps not his word. A sin that not only every good *Christian*, but every good *Heathen* doth abhorre. A sin, that not only brings *damnation* upon us, but casteth such into horrible *disgrace and reproach* upon God, that it cannot stand with Gods honour not to be avenged of a *Covenant-breaker*. *Tertullian* saith, that when a Christian forsakes his covenant, and the colours of Christ, and turnes to serve as the Devils souldier, he puts an *unspeakable discredit* upon God and Christ. For it is as much as if he should say; *I like the service of the Devill better then the service of God*. And it is just as if a souldier that hath waged war under a *Captaine*, and afterwards forsaking him turnes to another, and after that, leaves this other *Captaine* and returns to his former *Captain*. This is to preferre the first *Captain* before the second. This makes God complaine, *Ier. 2.4. What Iniquity have your Fathers found in me that they are gone far from me, &c.* And in the 11 verse, *Hath any Nation changed their Gods, which are yet no Gods? but my people have changed their glory for that which doth not profit.* *Basil* brings in the Devil insulting over Christ, and saying, *I never created nor redeemed these men, and yet they have obeyed me, and contemned thee, ô Christ, even after they have covenanted to be thine.* And then he addes, *Equidem ego istam futuram adversus Christum gloriationem hostis insolentem gravius longè esse statuo quam Gehenna supplicia.* That is, *I esteem this insulting of the Devill over Iesus Christ at the great day, to be more grievous to a true Saint, then all the torments in hell.* A saying worthy to be written in letters of gold. Seeing then that *covenant-breaking* is so great an abomination, the Lord
give

give us hearts to be humbled for this great abomination this day. And this will be a notable preparation to fit you to the renewing of your *Covenant*. For we reade that *Nehemiah* first called his people to *fast*, before he drew them into a *Covenant*. According to which pattern you are here met to pray, and fast, and humble your soules for your former *covenant-breaking*; and then to binde your selves anew unto the *Lord our God*. As *wax* when it is melted will receive the impression of a seal, which it will not do before: So will your hearts, when melted into godly sorrow for your sins, receive the seal of *God* abidingly upon them, which they will not do when hardned in sin.

Is every man that sins against the *Covenant* to be accounted *Object*. a *Covenant-breaker*, and a *perjured, sacrilegious* person?

By no means. For as every *failing* of a *Wife* doth not break *Answ.* the *Covenant* between her and her Husband; but she is to be accounted a *Wife* till she by committing adultery break the *Covenant*. So every miscarriage against the *Covenant of grace*, or against this *Nationall covenant*, doth not denominate us in a *Gospel-account Covenant-breakers*. But then *God* accounts us according to his *Gospel* to break *covenant*, when we do not only sin, but *commit sin* against the *Covenant*, when we do not only sin out of *weaknesse*, but out of *wickednesse*; when we do not only *faile*, but *fall* into sin: when we *forsake & renounce* the *Covenant*, when we *deale treacherously* in the *Covenant*, and enter into *league and covenant* with those sins which we have sworn against. When we walk into *Anti-covenant* paths, and willingly do contrary to what we swear; then are we *perjured, & unjust, and sacrilegious*, and guilty of all these sins formerly mentioned.

The fourth Use presents unto you a *Divine*, and therefore a *Use 4.* *sure project* to make the times happy. And that is, *Let all Covenant-takers labour to be Covenant-keepers*. It hath pleased *God* to put it in your hearts to renew your *Covenant*. The same *God* *inable* you to keep *Covenant*. It is said, *2 Chron. 34. 31, 32. The King made a covenant before the Lord, &c. And he caused all that were present in Jerusalem and Benjamin to stand to it. And 2 Kings 23. 3. The King stood by a pillar and made a covenant before the Lord, &c. and all the people stood to the covenant.* This is your duty, not only to take the *Covenant*, but to stand to the *Covenant*; and to stand to it, *maugre* all opposition to the contrary. According as we reade, *2 Chron. 15. 12, 13. And they entred into cove-*
F
nant

An exhortation unto Covenant keeping.

nant to seek the Lord God of their fathers, &c. That whosoever would not seek the Lord God of Israel, should be put to death, whether small or great, whether man or woman. For it is not the taking, but the keeping of the Covenant that will make you happy. God is stiled, *A God keeping covenant*, Deut. 9.4. Neh. 1.5. O that this might be the honour of this City! That we may say of it, *London is a City keeping covenant with God*. Great and many are the blessings entailed upon Covenant-keepers. Exod. 19.5,6. Now therefore if you will obey my voice indeed, and keep my covenant, then you shall be a peculiar treasure unto me above all people: for all the earth is mine: And ye shall be unto me a kingdome of Priests, and an holy Nation, &c. Psal. 25.10. All the paths of the Lord are mercy and truth unto such as keep his covenant, &c. Psal. 15.4.

There are three Covenants I shall perswade you in an especiall manner to stand to.

Epecially
to keep,
1. The Co-
venant we
made to
God in
baptisme.

1. *The covenant you made with God in Baptisme.* A Christian (saith Chrysostome) should never step out of doors, or lye down in his bed, or go into his closet, but he should remember that word *Abrenuncio*; that is, *He should remember the time when he did renounce the Devill and all his works*. Oh let us not forget that which we ought alwayes to remember! Let us remember to keep that Covenant, as ever we desire God should remember us in mercy at the great day.

2. The co-
venants we
have made
in our affli-
ction.

2. *The covenants which we have made unto God in our afflictions.* Famous is that passage of *Pliny* in one of his Epistles to one that desired rules from him how to order his life aright. I will (saith he) give you one rule which shall be instead of a thousand; *Vt tales esse perseveremus sani, quales nos futuros esse profiteamur infirmi.* That we should persevere to be such when we are well, as we promise to be when we are sick. A sentence never to be forgotten. The Lord help us to live accordingly.

3. The so-
lemne
League &
Covenant.

3. *The covenant which you are to take this day.* The happinesse or misery of England doth much depend upon the keeping or breaking of this Covenant. If England keep it, England by keeping covenant shall stand sure, according to that text, Ezek. 7.14. If England break it, God will break England in pieces. If England sleight it, God wil sleight England. If England forsake it, God will forsake England. And this shall be written upon the Tombe of perishing England: *Here lieth a Nation that hath broken the covenant of their God.* Remember what you have heard this day.
That

That it is the *brand of a Reprobate* to be a Covenant-breaker, &c. It is the part of a *Foole* to *vow*, and not to *pay his vomes*. And *God hath no delight in the sacrifice of fools*. Better not *vow*, then to *vow and not to pay*, *Eccl. 5. 4, 5*. It is such an high *prophanation* of *Gods Name*, as that *God cannot hold a Covenant-breaker guiltlesse*. It is *perjury, injustice, spirituall adultery, sacriledge, &c.* And the very *lifting up* of your hands this day (if you do not set heart and hand on work to keep covenant) *will be sufficient witnesse against you at the great day*. We reade, *Gen. 31. 44, 45, 46, 48, 49, 52, 53*. That *Jacob and Laban entred into a covenant, and took a heap of stones, and made them a Witnesse, & said, This heap is a Witnesse, &c. And they called the name of the place Mizpah: The Lord watch between me and thee, &c. The God of Abraham judge berwixt us, &c.* Such is your condition this day. You enter into Covenant to become the *Lords*, and to be valiant for his truth, and against his enemies. And the very *stones* of this *Church* shall be witnesse against you, if you *break covenant*. The name of this place may be called *Mizpah*. The *Lord* will watch over you for good, if you keep it, and for evill, if you break it. And all the *curfes* contained in the book of the Covenant shall light upon a *willing Covenant-breaker*. The *Lord* fasten these meditations and soul-awaking considerations upon your hearts. The *Lord* give you grace to keep close to the Covenant; & in keeping of it to keep *God* and a *good conscience*, w^{ch} are both lost by *covenant-breaking*.

There are six things which I shall perswade you unto in pursuance of your Covenant.

1. To be humbled for your own sins, and for the sins of the Kingdome; & more especially, *Because we have not as we ought valued the inestimable benefit of the Gospel, that we have not laboured to receive Christ in our hearts, nor to walk worthy of him in our lives, which are the causes of other sins and transgressions so much abounding amongst us. Gospel-sins are greater then legall-sins, and will bring Gospel-curses, which are greater then legall-curses. And therefore let us be humbled according to our Covenant for all our Gospel-abominations.*

2. You must be ambitious to go before one another in an example of reall reformation. You must swear vainly no more, be drunk no more, break the Sabbath no more, &c. You must remember what *David* saith, *Psal. 50. 16*. But unto the *Wicked God* saith, *What hast thou to do to take my covenant in thy mouth? seeing thou hatest*

6. Things to be done in pursuance of our Covenant.

instruction, and castest my words behinde thee. To sin willingly after we have sworn not to sin, is not only to sin against a Commandment, (as I have said) but to sin against an Oath; which is a double iniquity, and will procure a double damnation. And he that takes a Covenant to reform, and yet continueth unreformed, his Covenant will be unto him as the bitter water of jealousy was to the woman guilty of adultery, which made her belly to swell and thigh to rot, &c. Numb. 5. 22.

3. You must be careful to reform your families according to your covenant, and the example of Joshua, and Jacob, and the godly Kings forementioned.

4. You must endeavour according to your places and callings to bring the churches of God in the three Kingdoms to the nearest conjunction & uniformity in religion, &c. O blessed Unity! how comes it to passe that thou art so much sleighted and contemned? Was not unity one of the chief parts of Christs prayer unto his Father when he was here upon earth? John 17. 11. Is not unity amongst Christians one of the strongest arguments to perswade the world to believe in Christ, John 17. 21. Is it not the chiefe desire of the holy Apostles, that we should all speak the same things, and that there should be no divisions amongst us, but that we be perfectly joyned together in the same mind & in the same judgement? 1 Cor. 1. 10. Phil. 2. 1, 2, 3, &c. Is not unity the happinesse of heaven? Is it not the happinesse of a City to be at unity within it self? Is it not a good & pleasant thing for brethren to dwell together in unity? How comes it then to passe that this part of the Covenant is so much forgotten? The Lord mind you of it this day! And the Lord make this great & famous City a City of holinesse, and a City at unity within it self! For if unity be destroyed, purity will quickly also be destroyed. The Church of God is *una* as well as *sancta*. It is but one church as well as is it a holy church. And Jesus Christ gave some to be Apostles, some Evangelists, some Prophets, some Pastors and Teachers, &c. till we all come to the unity of the faith. Not only to the purity, but to the unity of the faith. The government of Christ is appointed for the keeping of his Church in unity as well as purity. Those things which God hath joyned together, let no man put asunder. That government which doth not promote unity as well as purity, is not the government of Christ. Oh the misery of that kingdom where Church-divisions are nourished and fomented! A kingdome, or a church, divided against it self cannot stand.

Would

Would it not be a sad thing to see twelve in a family, and one of them a *Presbyterian*, another an *Independent*, another a *Brownist*, another an *Antinomian*, another an *Anabaptist*, another a *Famili-
list*, another for the *Prelatical* government, another a *Seeker*, another a *Papist*, and the tenth it may be an *Atheist*, the eleventh a *Jew*, & the twelfth a *Turk*? The Lord in his due time heal our divisions, & make you his choice instruments according to your places, that the *Lord may be one, & his name one in the three kingdoms*!

5. You must endeavour in pursuance of your Covenant to *extirpate Popery, Prelacy, Heresie, Schisme, Prophanenesse, & whatsoever shall be found contrary to sound doctrine and the power of godlineffe, &c.* That so this City may be a City of *holinesse, unity*, and a City of *truth*, as is prophecied of Jerusalem, *Zach. 8. 3.* Oh blessed *truth*, how is it that thou art so lightly esteemed on! Is not *truth* more precious then *gold*, and more to be prized then *Rubies*? Are we not to *buy the truth and sell it not*? Did not *Christ* come into the world to *bear witnesse to the truth*? Did not *grace and truth* come by *Iesus Christ*? Is not *Christ* the way, the truth, and the life? How is it then that *truth* is fallen in the streets, and equity cannot enter? how is it that *truth faileth*, and *he that departeth from evill maketh himself a prey*? *Esay 59. 14, 15.* How is it that *men bend their tongues like bowes for lies, but they are not valiant for the truth upon earth*? *Jer. 9. 3.* The Lord make you lovers of truth and peace.

6. You must take heed of that *curst monster of Indifferency & Neutrality*. Study these six texts of Scripture, *Judg. 5. 23. Judg. 8. 6, 7. 16. Deut. 23. 3, 4. Jer. 48. 10. Mat. 12. 30. Mar. 8. 38.* O that these Scriptures were written in your hearts with a pen of iron! A *Neuter* in Gods cause is a *lukewarm Christian*, whom God will spue out of his mouth; he is a *dead member of Christs body*, fit to be cut off. Oh that the Lord would raise up your hearts this day (*Right Honourable, Right Worshipfull, and Well beloved*) to a high pitch of zeal for him and his cause! God hath made you instruments to do wonderfull things for this kingdom: you have been the Saviours of the kingdom; you have vindicated the liberties of the *Parliament*, and your own liberties; and the *Kings army* by your means in a great measure is brought very low. But yet as *Christ* said to the young man, so do I to you: *There is one thing wanting: and that one thing is the one thing necessary*; The Church is *unsettled*, *Discipline unereccted*, *Religion is tottering*. For *Zions* sake hold not your peace, and for *Jerusalems* sake keep not silence,
Itir

stir up your zeal and your strength. Use your interest and your power in an orderly, and regular, and peaceable way according to your places. *And what can you not do?*

You have ventured one arrow already, shoot another, and if that miscarry, shoot another, you will speed at last. He that cuts down a tree though he cuts it not down at the first and second blow, yet the first and second and third blow prepare to the speeding blow, to that blow that cuts it down. You have delivered one petition already, deliver another, and if that speed not, deliver another. The speeding petition will come at last. In a word, doe your duties according to your oath, and according to your capacities, (and all in a regular way) and leave the issue to God.

Quest.

But some will say, How shall I doe to get up my heart to this high pitch that I may be a Covenant-keeper?

Ans.

I will propound these four helps.

Four helps
to keep the
solemn
League &
Covenant.

The Cove-
nant must
be a daily
argument
against sin,
& a daily
weapon to
beat back
all tempta-
tions.

1. Labour to be *always mindefull of your Covenant*, according to that text, 1 Chron. 16. 15. *God is always mindfull of his Covenant*. It was the great sin of the people of Israel, that they were *unmindfull of the Covenant*, Neh. 9. 17. They first forgot the Covenant, and afterwards did quickly forsake it. He that forgets the Covenant, must needs be a Covenant-breaker. Let us therefore remember it, and carry it about us as *quotidianum argumentum*, and *quotidianum munimentum*. First, let us make the Covenant a daily argument against all sin & iniquity, and when we are tempted to any sin, let us say, *I have sworn to forsake my old iniquities*: and if I commit this sin, I am not onely a Commandment-breaker, but an Oath-breaker; I am perjur'd. I have sworn to reform my family, and therefore I will not suffer a wicked person to tarry in my family. I have sworn against neutrality, and indifferency, and therefore I will be zealous in Gods cause, &c. Secondly, let us make this Covenant a daily muniment, and armour of defence, to beat back all the fiery darts of the Devil. When any one tempts thee by promise of preferment to doe contrary to thy Covenant, or by threatening to ruine thee for the hearty pursuing of thy Covenant, here is a ready answer; *I am sworn to doe what I doe*, and if I doe otherwise, I am a perjured wretch.

This is as a wall of brasse to resist any dart that shall be shot against thee for well-doing according to thy Covenant. Famous is the story of Hannibal, which he told to King Antiochus, when he

he required aid of him against the Romanes. *When I was 9 years old (said he) my Father carried me to the Altar, and made me take an Oath to be an irreconcilable foe to the Romanes. In pursuance of this Oath, I have waged war against them these 36 years. To keep this Oath I have left my Country, and am come to seek aid at your hands, which if you deny, I will travell over all the World to finde out some enemies to the Romane State. Odi, odioque sum Romanis.* If an Oath did so mightily operate in Hannibal, let the Oath you are to take this day, work as powerfully upon you; And make your Oath an argument to oppose personall sins, and family sins, and to oppose *Heretic, Schisme, and all profanenesse*, and to endeavour to bring the Churches of God in the three Kingdomes to the neereſt conjunction, and uniformity, &c. And let this Oath be armour of proof against all temptations to the contrary. And know this one thing, that if the Covenant be not a daily argument and muniment against sin, it will become upon your breaking of it, *quotidianum testimonium, & aeternum opprobrium.* A daily witnesse against you, as the book of the law was, *Deut. 31. 26.* and an everlasting shame and reproach unto you and yours.

2. Let us have *high thoughts of the Covenant.* Actions, and affections follow our apprehensions. If thy judgement be beleaped with a corrupt opinion about the Covenant, thy affections and actions will quickly be beleaped also. And therefore you ought to endeavour according to your places, that nothing be spoken, or written, that may tend to the prejudice of the Covenant.

3. You must not take it in your owne strengths, but in Gods strength. As it is taken in Gods presence, so it must be taken with Gods assistance, with *selfe-abasing, selfe-denying, selfe-humbling hearts*; you must take it joyfully and tremblingly; rejoycing in God and in his strength, and yet trembling for fear of your own unworthinesse and unstedfastnesse in the Covenant.

4. You must take heed of the *cursed sin of selfe-love*, which is placed in the fore-front as the cause of all the Catalogue of sins here named; *Because men are lovers of themselves*, therefore they are covetous, &c. and therefore they are Covenant-breakers. A *selfe-seeker* cannot be a Covenant-keeper; this is a sinne that you must hate as the very gates of hell.

And this is the second sin that I promised in the beginning of

of my Sermon to speak on : but the time and your other occasions will not permit. There is a *naturall self-love*, and a *divine self-love*, and a *sinfull self-love*. This *sinfull self-love* is when we make our selves the last end of all our actions, when we so *love our selves*, as to *love no man but our selves*, according to the Proverb, *Every man for himself, &c.* When we pretend *God and his glory*, and the *common good*: but intend our *selfes*, and our own *private gain and interest*; when we serve *God upon politique designs*; Of this *sinfull self-love* the Apostle speaks, *Phil. 2.21. For all seek their own, and not the things of Jesus Christ.* And if we had a window to look into the hearts of most people, we should finde their hearts made up all of this *Idolatrous self-love*. Men deal with *God* as it is reported of *Cnidius* a great *Architectist*, who building a sumptuous Watch-Tower for the *King of Egypt* (a Tower to discover the rocks to Mariners) such was his craft, that he caused his own name to be *engraven'd* upon a *stone* in the wall, in *great letters*, and over that stone he caused it to be *plaistered* with *lime and mortar*, and upon the outside wrote the name of the *King of Egypt*, as pretending that he should have all the honour. But here was his cunning: he knew that in time the water would consume (as it did) the *plaistering*, and afterwards his own name and memory should appear and abide. Just so doe most people deal with *God* and with his religion, and with the *publique*. If we looke without doors, we shall see nothing written but *pro bono publico, &c.* All their discourse is for the better promoting of *Godliness*: but if we could look within, we should see written, *Pro bono privato, &c.* All their designs are for to promote themselves. They *monopolize* and *ingrosse* all to themselves, as if made for themselves. Where this *sinfull self-love dwels*, there *dwels* no *love to God*, no *love to thy brother*, no *love to Church nor State*. This *sinfull self-love* is the *Caterpillar* that destroyeth *Church and Common-wealth*. It is from this *sinfull self-love* that the *publique affairs* drive on so heavily, and that *Church-government* is not settled, and that our *Covenant* is so much neglected. Of this sin I cannot now speak: but when *God* shall offer opportunity, I shall endeavour to uncase it before you. In the mean time, the Lord give you grace to hate it as *hell it self*.

